

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)

Differential Response Steering Committee (DRSC)

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2015

Videoconference Locations

DCFS, 6171 W Charleston, Building 8, Conference Room B, Las Vegas NV 89146

DCFS, 4126 Technology Way, 3rd Floor, Carson City NV 89706

DCFS, 1010 Ruby Vista Drive #101, Elko NV 89801

Attendees

Las Vegas

Alma Spears, Boys and Girls Clubs of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas West

Angela Phillips, Olive Crest, Las Vegas North

Kristin Patterson, HopeLink, Las Vegas South

Shannon Cole, East Valley Family Services, Las Vegas East, Central, and Pahrump

Shay Riggs-Horn, Clark County DFS Intake Supervisor

Toby Hyman, Elena Espinoza and Gloria Sulhoff, DHHS Director's Office, Grants Management Unit (GMU)

Carson City

Joyce Buckingham, Ron Wood FRC

Karen McGriff, DCFS

Kristen Monibi, Washoe County Department of Social Services

Laura Adair and Laurie Olson, DHHS Director's Office (DO), GMU

Mike Moulain, Washoe County School District

Nathan Orme, Public Information Officer, DHHS DO

Patrick White, The Children's Cabinet

Wendy Pearce, FRIENDS FRC, Churchill County

Elko

Holly Zumwalt, FRC of Northeastern Nevada

Lindsey Kincaid, FRC of Northeastern Nevada

Michelle Gonzales, DCFS

Via Phone

Kandee Mortenson, DCFS Lyon County

Edrie LaVoy, Lyon County Human Services

Jennifer Pritchett and Vickie Malone, Clark County Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement

Kelli Weishaupt, DCFS Lyon, Churchill, Mineral and Pershing Counties

I. Call to Order

Toby Hyman welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 9:01 am. Roll call was taken in Las Vegas, Elko and Carson City, and participants on the phone identified themselves.

II. Public Comment

None

III. Approve Minutes of May 6, 2015 DRSC Meeting

Wendy Pearce provided a correction from Karen Stoll, who could not be in attendance. On page 4, under Karen's report for Churchill County, the minutes should be corrected to read that when they heard about the suicide and other children considering self-harm, they went to the school and offered to do QPR suicide prevention training, but were turned down.

- There being no further corrections or additions to the minutes, Mike Moulian moved to approve the minutes of May 6, 2015 with the correction as noted. The motion was seconded by Alma Spears.

IV. DR Response Time to Contact Family

Toby reported that Debbie Croshaw, Intake Manager at Clark County Division of Family Services, spoke at the May 28th "Big DR Meeting" attended by DR workers from the five DR service areas in Clark County and Pahrump, and CCDFS and DWSS partners. They were seeing a lot of "attempted to contact" and phone tag notes in the case files and were concerned about meeting the response times set forth in policy. Toby presented some proposed changes to the DCFS State Policy Manual, Section 0503 regarding Differential Response that would address how DR staff initially contacts families once a Priority 3 DR Report is accepted. Toby reviewed the policy section handouts showing suggested changes as follows.

In Policy 0503.5, Procedures, Section B: Referral to Community Based Service Providers under a Memorandum of Understanding.

- Item 2: *Change case load per DR worker* from 15 to 20 open cases at any time
- Item 3: If unable to accept a report, contact child welfare agency (*add phrase*) "within the same working day"
- Item 4a: DR supervisor acknowledges acceptance of report to the welfare agency (*add phrase*) "within the same working day"
- *Add Item 4b*: Attempt to make face to face contact at the family's home as soon as possible, (added during discussion: "but within three working days,") after accepting the DR report, and document the contact in UNITY
- *Change Item 4c from*: "Attempt to contact each family and schedule an appointment to meet with the referred family within three (3) working days of receipt of the referral." *To*: "If unable to make initial face to face contact with the family, attempt to contact each family via telephone and schedule an appointment to meet with the referred family within three (3) working days (*change* "from receipt of" to "accepting") the referral.
- Item 4 c (now 4d): Obtain the parent's signature on the Informed Content for Services (*add phrase*) "and the Release of Information form" prior to contacting the school of any other agencies regarding the child and/or family.
- Item 4f (now 4g): If a family refuses to allow the Community Based Service Provider to make contact or conduct an assessment, the CBSP will note this in UNITY and communicate this to the welfare agency (*add phrase*) "within the next working day following the refusal".

Toby explained the reason for adding Item 4b. The original policy of having the DR worker telephone the family to make an appointment impacts response time. It takes longer if the family can't be reached or found through Diligent Search. Quality Assurance reviews found that response times were not being met, so a new policy has been implemented in Clark County - once a report is accepted, DR goes out to try to find the family, and this has led to improved response times.

Regarding Item 3 of the DR Policy, Toby stated that in Clark County, DR supervisors accept cases in off hours on their cell phone, usually within the same day. Patrick said that Washoe County DR supervisors do not review reports after hours; they get a report number and access the report in UNITY the next day. The DR supervisors in Elko and Lyon County added that they also do not review reports after hours.

Mike asked how face-to-face contact affects mileage expenses, or if the DR workers use agency vehicles. Toby replied that some agencies have cars and some do not, but the agencies' DR program budgets include travel expense reimbursement in either case.

In response to some questions, Toby clarified that the clock starts ticking for DR when the case becomes a UNITY report. The three day period begins when the supervisor assigns the case to the DR worker. The clock stops when the family agrees to accept services and the informed consent form is signed. Until they sign the form, there is no guarantee they won't change their mind.

Kristen Monibi commented that the parents don't always sign the form. Pat stated they conduct the safety assessment but don't always get a signed form, and Churchill and Elko said it's the same with them. Mike added that they never know when a report will come in; it may be that the workers have full days booked and wouldn't be able to drop everything to go see the family. Toby was not aware that things were working differently in Washoe and the Rurals than in Clark; she said we will need to rethink the three day response time. If the family refuses services, there needs to be some discussion on what to do with the case. Wendy said she always tries to be at the home within three days. She discusses all cases with the supervisor, and if services are refused, she discusses with DCFS as well. Toby said this topic will need to be discussed further, especially with regard to quality assurance looking at response times and whether DR is in compliance or not.

Angela shared that at first, DR staff in Clark County were apprehensive about making unannounced home visits, but once they started, they found they were more successful than when they called in advance. They ran into challenges over the phone; "Now's not a good time", they never call back, and then when we show up, they don't open the door. They feel the family out and ask if this is a good time; mostly they are let in and get the Informed Consent signed right then. They usually don't conduct a safety assessment at the first meeting; they usually schedule a follow up to meet the kids and do a safety assessment. This visit is solely to make initial contact. In 4 years they have had only two refusals to sign the papers. Kristin, Shannon, and Alma all agreed. Wendy also agreed that the process works for her; people are thankful she's at their door with services. She stated that on the phone people distrust her and want to call her back to confirm who she is. It's easier to hang up the phone than slam the door.

Toby suggested Pat try the new process, if the home is nearby, and see how it works. Pat asked whether the case managers or the supervisors go out, because as supervisor, Pat makes all the initial contact. Wendy in Churchill County does it and in Clark County it's the caseworkers.

Joyce asked a question about compliance issues with the three day rule: If the DR worker goes out and makes face to face contact, but the family rejects services and refuses to sign a consent form, does the file have to be end dated within three days? Toby said no; put in your notes that you went out, saw the family, and the family refused services. You could end date it at that point. But the three working day rule pertains to making contact with the family. Policy also states if you can't reach the family, then you have up to 10 days to try to reach them via mail. So no, you don't have to do that within three days. Toby thanked everyone for their input and feedback during this discussion.

V. Criteria for Screened-in P3 DR Reports

Toby explained that County intake policies can be stricter than state policy, but not less strict. The three day response rule was not in DCFS intake policy but has been added. Amber Howell is looking at why Washoe County has not implemented referring five and under reports to the DR program. Kristen Monibi needed to leave the meeting early but stated that she would like to keep the option to accept minor physical injury reports with older children. Kelli said they discussed that in the Intake Policy workgroup and Lyon County has been successful working with these cases. Toby added that Clark County discussed this a few years ago, and still hasn't decided that minor physical injury reports will be sent to DR. Holly said they haven't sent any of those back, but they've received abandonment cases. Toby said that will be part of the new intake procedures and those cases are not acceptable for DR. Kristen explained in the workgroup that abandonment means there is no parent or caregiver around or available; i.e. the parents have left town. Joyce asked for clarification on the definition of "physical injury"; does this mean injuries that leave a mark? Kristen Monibi explained that the difference between an injury that is "not acceptable" versus "questionable" is hard to pin down because each case is different. Wendy brought up the issue of downgrading a CPS case to DR. UNITY doesn't allow a case to be downgraded. The Intake workgroup talked about this; sometimes CPS and DR will go out together before determining how to classify the report. Alma said in questionable cases, CPS will go out with them or send a referral to review before the case is assigned. In closing, Toby stated that the workgroup would be meeting again later that week, and this item will be added to the November DR meeting agenda.

VI. NCFAS-G Documentation in UNITY

The NCFAS-G is the assessment that DR has used since the program's inception; DR training covers how to conduct the assessment. Over the years there has been miscommunication on how to document in UNITY. Some are documenting both the initial and closing assessments, while some are not. If you have an ongoing case, an assessment needs to be done and entered into UNITY. Because there is no form in UNITY that DR can access, Toby described a way to enter NCFAS scores by copying and pasting from a Word document. She provided a handout explaining the method that can be used when opening and closing a case.

Wendy described an issue they have with VPN; it closes down their documents and locks them out of everything. They used to be able to open Word and copy and paste into UNITY, but not anymore. There's a dual sign in for VPN which is hard to explain and very confusing. She can't print any documents from UNITY. Her IT folks are working on it with UNITY IT. Mike does not have that problem but he does have others that started with the new VPN. Holly has problems with documents when VPN is open; they are not doing well with VPM. Toby will contact UNITY to get the NCFAS-G form in UNITY as soon as possible.

VII. Program Updates

A. Numbers Served.

Toby explained that the quarterly report was not yet available due to some challenges with the reporting templates from three DR sites. Some formulas were missing from the monthly report form, so the numbers did not match up on the end-of-year report. The report will be sent out once it has been revised.

B. Site Updates.

Mike Mouliau, Washoe County School District FRC: It has been relatively slow during the summer. Wylie has around ten cases. Rebecca's case load was down because she wasn't

assigned any new cases after tendering her resignation. Her last day is Friday, which is unfortunate timing with school starting on Monday. Wylie is doing a great job.

Joyce Buckingham, Ron Wood FRC: It's been slow, with six cases in Carson and three in Douglas. They had 15 cases between the two workers but are ready to close six today. Things are going well.

Pat White, The Children's Cabinet: Caseloads have stayed steady over the summer, partly because Olympia's cases were transferred to others; her last day is Friday. He expects things will pick up Monday. Each of their two workers has 12-13 cases. A new worker, Amanda, starts Monday. She is scheduled for Core Training on the 17th. Kristin will do the safety training. When Toby asked if she had been set up in UNITY, Pat said he thought Toby handled that.

Wendy Pearce, Churchill: Workloads have stayed consistent through the summer with seven or eight cases. They would get three, and close three. They have an extended school year for special education, so have been seeing a lot of special needs kids. They held a Community Day, which provided haircuts, school supplies, clothes, etc., and kids attended the Salvation Army summer camp. She mentioned that the kids from Yerington, Fernley, and Hawthorne had not signed up in those areas in Lyon County. Edrie asked Wendy to call her and thanked her for bringing it up. Wendy said they are finally working through the mess of the move. They will be losing Lori, so it will be just herself and Karen in the office. It may be hard to contact them since they won't always be in the office.

Holly Zumwalt, Elko County: It has been very slow, the slowest she has seen in five years. They have a few cases coming in, one of which is in Wendover, a 2½ hour drive one way.

Edrie LaVoie, Lyon County: It has been very slow. Anna is analyzing caseloads with Candy and staff to ensure adequate caseloads. Staff have been getting training in Core and in their home visitation program. They are getting priority 3 cases; these are being more complex, with more dynamics within families. They are working on VPN security awareness training. Toby asked that they scan and email their training certificates to Steve with a copy to her. Kande Mortenson added that things have been slow; some cases didn't even rise to priority 3, but they were assigned anyway just to put services in the home.

Alma Spears, Las Vegas West: They currently have eleven cases; Tomarco has four, and Kristen seven. Because of the very low caseload she's been assigning other duties. Over the summer they were able to send some DR kids to sleepaway camp. The organization covered the fees for 15 FRC kids to attend camp, and they are now guaranteed slots every summer. Tomarco has resigned to take a new position at the County as a juvenile probation officer. He gave a lot of notice; his last day is the 9th or 10th of September.

Kristin Patterson, Las Vegas South: They have been steady at 16 cases, eight per worker. The workers have been helping with the FRC over the summer. Alice and Frank are having issues accessing case notes in UNITY. Toby suggested that everyone contact the help desk each time they have a problem, and just don't use it; use UNITY 1 instead.

Angela Phillips, Las Vegas North: One DR worker is out on maternity leave; the other has 21 cases, two of which will be closing in a couple of days. They are planning their Back to School Drive, collecting school supplies, and the monthly birthday club blowout for the kids staffed by Apple employees.

Shannon Cole, Las Vegas Central, East and Pahrump: Las Vegas Central is busier than East, seeing cases in the double digits. Once school starts, they will be hiring one part time worker to help Central/East. Pahrump is at ten cases.

Laurie Olson, GMU Chief: Laurie announced that Rique Robb, the State Co-Coordinator for DR North and Rurals, left the GMU for a position with ADSD. She introduced Elena Espinoza, new

GMU program manager in Las Vegas, and commented on the good fortune that Elena is able to receive training and mentoring from Toby.

VIII. Public Comment

None

IX. Additional Announcements and Adjourn

Toby announced that everyone had completed the VPN requirement of online security training, and thanked everyone for their prompt action on such short notice. She found out on July 1, when she began getting calls from DR staff who were unable to access VPN, that a law passed during the 2015 legislative session now requires all VPN users to take an online security class and submit background checks to the Department of Administration. She didn't send this information to Lyon County or Children's Cabinet originally because she never had to submit requirements or registration for either of them. But Steve Ingersoll, who is the contact person for the online training, mentioned background checks for Lyon County and Children's Cabinet, so at that point Toby sent the information along to them.

Toby announced the next meeting date of November 4, when the participants in the north will be meeting in Reno. The meeting adjourned at 10:54 AM.